

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 11625 01 OF 02 181236Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-07 IO-13 TRSE-00 DHA-02 /081 W
-----099009 181314Z /45

R 180935Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5930
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 11625

E.O. 11625: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IT, US

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH DC CHAMBER GROUP LEADER PICCOLI

SUMMARY. DURING A ONE-HOUR MEETING JULY 13 CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC (DC) CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES GROUP LEADER FLAMINIO PICCOLI EXPRESSED TO ME HIS SATISFACTION AT THE COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAMMATIC ACCORD WHICH WILL PROVIDE A MOMENTARY POLITICAL TRUCE FOR THE COUNTRY. HE STATED THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT DC PARLIAMENTARIANS WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO THE LEFT IN THE FORM OF ASSOCIATING THE COMMUNISTS (PCI) WITH THE MAJORITY OR INCLUDING TECHNICIANS ACCEPTABLE TO THE LEFT IN A FUTURE CABINET. CONCERNING THE PCI, PICCOLI OBSERVED THAT DURING THE LAST TEN MONTHS THE PARTY HAS SHOWN SIGNS OF INCREASING INTERNAL STRAINS, AND HE IDENTIFIED THREE GROUPS WHICH HAVE DEVELOPED WITHIN LEADERSHIP RANKS. HE EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT IF THE DC REMAINS UNITED AND PLAYS ITS CARDS PROPERLY TIME WOULD WORK IN ITS FAVOR AND ENSURE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 11625 01 OF 02 181236Z

THAT THE PARTY WOULD REMAIN DOMINANT ON THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SCENE. PICCOLI EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE POLICY OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION TOWARDS ITALY, AND HE NOTED THAT IN THE CONTEXT OF ITS OVERALL FOREIGN POLICY THE UNITED STATES SHOULD COMBINE IDEALISM WITH REALISM. END SUMMARY.

1. PICCOLI EXPRESSED TO ME HIS SATISFACTION THAT WORK ON THE PROGRAMMATIC ACCORD HAS BEEN COMPLETED, WHICH SHOULD PROVIDE THE COUNTRY WITH AT LEAST A BRIEF PERIOD OF AN UNEASY POLITICAL TRUCE, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, HE CONFIRMED THAT THERE IS WIDESPREAD UNEASE AMONG DC PARLIAMENTARIANS ABOUT THE ACCORD, PARTICULARLY AS IT IS PERCEIVED AS MAKING CONCESSIONS TO THE PCI AND PROVIDING THEM WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO CLAIM ANOTHER "SMALL STEP FORWARD" TOWARDS THEIR EVENTUAL GOAL OF PARTICIPATING IN THE GOVERNING OF THE COUNTRY. IT IS CLEAR TO PICCOLI THAT DC PARLIAMENTARIANS IN ALL SECTORS OF THE PARTY ARE NOT PREPARED TO MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO THE PCI IN TERMS OF ASSOCIATING IT WITH THE MAJORITY OR INCLUDING TECHNICIANS ACCEPTABLE TO THE PCI IN A CABINET AND THAT IF PUSHED THEY WOULD PREFER TO GO TO EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS. IN PICCOLI'S OPINION, THE KEY TO DC TACTICAL SUCCESS IN THE COMING MONTHS WILL BE THE PARTY'S ABILITY TO MAINTAIN THE TYPE OF CLOSED RANKS AND UNITY WHICH IT HAS DEMONSTRATED DURING THE LAST THREE MONTHS WHEN THE PROGRAMMATIC ACCORD WAS BEING NEGOTIATED. AS FOR THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT, PICCOLI DID NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT WOULD LAST INTO 1979 IN THE ABSENCE OF A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE.

2. TURNING TO THE PCI, PICCOLI OBSERVED THAT THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 11625 01 OF 02 181236Z

PERIOD SINCE THE 1976 NATIONAL ELECTIONS HAS SEEN THE PARTY SEEKING TO CLUTCH THE DC RATHER THAN THE DC ATTEMPTING TO CLUTCH THE PCII. DURING THIS PERIOD INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES HAVE NATURALLY DEVELOPED FOR THE PCI, A FACT THAT THE DC WAS ABLE TO VERIFY DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE PROGRAMMATIC ACCORD. PICCOLI MENTIONED THE EMERGENCE OF THREE GROUPS WITHIN THE PCI LED BY COSSUTTA, BERLINGUER AND AMENDOLA RESPECTIVELY, AND HE DESCRIBED THE BASE OF THE PARTY AS "TOTALITARIAN" AND TROUBLED. HE BELIEVED THAT BERLINGUER REMAINS FIRMLY IN COMMAND OF THE PARTY APPARATUS, BUT NOTED THAT COSSUTTA AND HIS FOLLOWERS, WHO HAD SUFFERED SETBACKS ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO, HAVE SHOWN SIGNS OF INCREASING STRENGTH AND INFLUENCE IN RECENT MONTHS.

3. PICCOLI CALLED THE SOCIALISTS (PSI) A DISASTER AND GAVE LITTLE HOPE THAT THE PSI WOULD BE ABLE TO SORT OUT ITS INTERNAL PROBLEMS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HE DESCRIBED THE PARTY AS DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS, THE GENERATION OF DE MARTINO AND MANCINI WHICH IS WORN OUT AND NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE DECISIVE LEADERSHIP, AND THE GENERATION OF THE 40 YEAR OLDS WHO HAVE THE

KNIVES OUT AGAINST EACH OTHER AND WHO ARE NOW MORE
CONCERNED ABOUT PERSONAL POSITIONS THAN THE
INTERESTS OF THE NATION. PICCOLI SAID THAT IF THE PSI
IS UNABLE TO RESOLVE ITS INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS
DURING CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN JULY AND SEPTEMBER,
THE FALL OUT COULD BE PRESSURE FOR A GOVERNMENT CRISIS
IN THE EARLY AUTUMN OR IN JANUARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 11625 02 OF 02 181256Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-07 IO-13 TRSE-00 DHA-02 /081 W
-----099253 181318Z /45

R 180935Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5931
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 11625

E.O. 11625: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IT, US

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH DC CHAMBER GROUP LEADER PICCOLI

4. IN PICCOLI'S JUDGMENT, BERLINGUER RECOGNIZES THAT
THERE ARE LIMITS BEYOND WHICH THE DC CANNOT BE PUSHED
WITHOUT THE RISK OF EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS. BASED
ON HIS OBSERVATION OF BERLINGUER DURING THE INTER-PARTY
NEGOTIATIONS, HE FEELS THE PCI LEADER IS PRESSING FOR
MODERATION IN TERMS OF THE TYPES OF DEMANDS PLACED
BEFORE THE DC. PICCOLI THINKS THAT BERLINGUER HAS
FOR THE TIME BEING OBTAINED THE POLITICAL OBJECTIVES HE
AND HIS GROUP DESIRE. THUS, HE WOULD BE CONTENT NOT TO PUSH
FOR ANYTHING MORE, SINCE THAT COULD LEAD TO A POLITICAL
CRISIS PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SIX-MONTH
PERIOD BEFORE THE ELECTION OF A PRESIDENT DURING

WHICH NATIONAL ELECTIONS CANNOT BE HELD. (THIS PERIOD BEGINS NEXT JUNE.) HOWEVER, BERLINGUER'S POSITION WILL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 11625 02 OF 02 181256Z

BE COMPLICATED BY THE SOCIALISTS WHO NORMALLY EXPRESS THEIR INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES BY ATTACKING FRONTALLY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE DC. SHOULD BE PSI FOLLOW THIS COURSE AFTER ITS FORTHCOMING CENTRAL COMMITTEE SESSIONS, BERLINGUER WOULD BE HARD PRESSED NOT TO MANEUVER IN THE SAME DIRECTION EVEN THOUGH HE IS AWARE OF THE RISKS INVOLVED.

5. PICCOLI BELIEVES THAT THE DC'S NATIONAL FORTUNES ARE ON THE UPSWING. DECLARING THAT THE ONLY REAL WINNERS OF THE 1976 ELECTIONS WERE THE COMMUNISTS, HE WENT ON TO ASSERT THAT THE DC, THROUGH ITS RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR IN THE POST-ELECTORAL PERIOD, HAS RECOVERED FROM ITS LOW EBB. HE NOTED THAT ALMOST HALF OF THE PRESENT DC PARLIAMENTARIANS WERE ELECTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 1976, WHICH AUGERS WELL FOR PARTY RENEWAL. HE SAID THAT HIS GENERATION OF LEADERS MUST RECOGNIZE THE ROLE THAT THESE PARLIAMENTARIANS SHOULD PLAY IN THE PARTY AND ENCOURAGE THEM IN THEIR EFFORTS. ON THE OTHER HAND PICCOLI HAD FEW KIND WORKDS FOR THE SECOND GENERATION OF DC LEADERS (THOSE IN THEIR 50'S OF WHOM HE ONLY CITED FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI), DESCRIBING THEM AS HAVING NOTHING TO OFFER TO THE PARTY. AS FOR THE NEW GENERATION, HE SAID THEY EMERGED AT A TIME WHEN IT WAS GENERALLY CONSIDERED A SHAME TO BE PUBLICLY KNOWN AS A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT, A SITUATION THAT HAS BEEN DRAMATICALLY REVERSED IN THE LAST YEAR. IN SUM, PICCOLI SUGGESTED THAT THE DC HAS A SUBSTANTIALLY BETTER PUBLIC IMAGE TODAY THAN AT ANY TIME IN THE LAST FEW YEARS.

6. SPEAKINGPERSONALLY, PICCOLI NOTED THE NEED FOR A DRASTIC SHAKEUP AT CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY HEAD-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 11625 02 OF 02 181256Z

QUARTERS. HE COMPLAINED OF THE LACK OF DECISIVE LEADERSHIP, AND SAID THAT AS A RESULT OF THE VOID THAT HAS BEEN CREATED, THE CENTER OF PARTY LIFE HAS SHIFTED TO THE DC PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS.

7. I DREW TO PICCOLI'S ATTENTION THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARDS ITALY, PARTICULARLY AS THE

PRESIDENT DEFINED IT IN HIS MAY INTERVIEW WITH SOME EUROPEAN JOURNALISTS, AND ASKED HIM FOR HIS REACTION TO IT. HE REPLIED THAT HE WAS COMPLETELY SATISFIED WITH OUR CURRENT POLICY AND WELCOMED THE CHANGE IN OUR VISA PRACTICES SINCE HE FEELS THAT EXPOSURE TO THE UNITED STATES HAS A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON PCI LEADERS. HE URGED US TO CONTINUE OUR OPPOSITION TO PCI ENTRY INTO AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, BUT SUGGESTED THAT WE NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT THERE ARE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE PCI WHICH ARE TRYING TO CHANGE IT IN A POSITIVE DIRECTION. PICCOLI HAD STRONG WORDS OF SUPPORT FOR THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, SUGGESTING THAT IT IS HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION. FINALLY, PICCOLI EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WOULD CONTINUE TO MIX IDEALISM WITH REALISM IN THE CONDUCT OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY.

8. COMMENT. I WAS IMPRESSED BY THE LUCID ANALYSIS OF THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SCENE WHICH PICCOLI PRESENTED. HIS UPBEAT TONE ABOUT DC FORTUNES, SOMETHING WHICH ONE WOULD NOT HAVE EXPERIENCED A YEAR AGO IN THE WAKE OF THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS, IS NOT NECESSARILY SHARED BY ALL IN THE PARTY. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS CLEARLY SYMP- TOMATIC OF AN INCREASING CONFIDENCE THAT THE DC IS FINDING ITSELF AS IT RECOGNIZES THE ABILITY OF THE ANDREOTTI-LED DC GOVERNMENT TO SURVIVE IN THE ABSENCE OF A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE AND PERCEIVES THE NATURE OF THE DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE PCI IS EXPERIENCING. GARDNER
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ROME 11625 02 OF 02 181256Z

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, MEETINGS, POLITICAL PARTIES, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ROME11625
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770254-1220
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770747/aaaabogn.tel
Line Count: 259
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 10881d68-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1828946
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONVERSATION WITH DC CHAMBER GROUP LEADER PICCOLI SUMMARY. DURING A ONE-HOUR MEETING JULY 13 CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC (DC) CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES GROUP LEADER FLAMINIO PIC
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IT, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/10881d68-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009